

COMMUNICATION IN THE WORKPLACE

A CREATIVE PROJECT

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

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MASTER OF ARTS

BY

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Communication in the workplace

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Objectives Chart

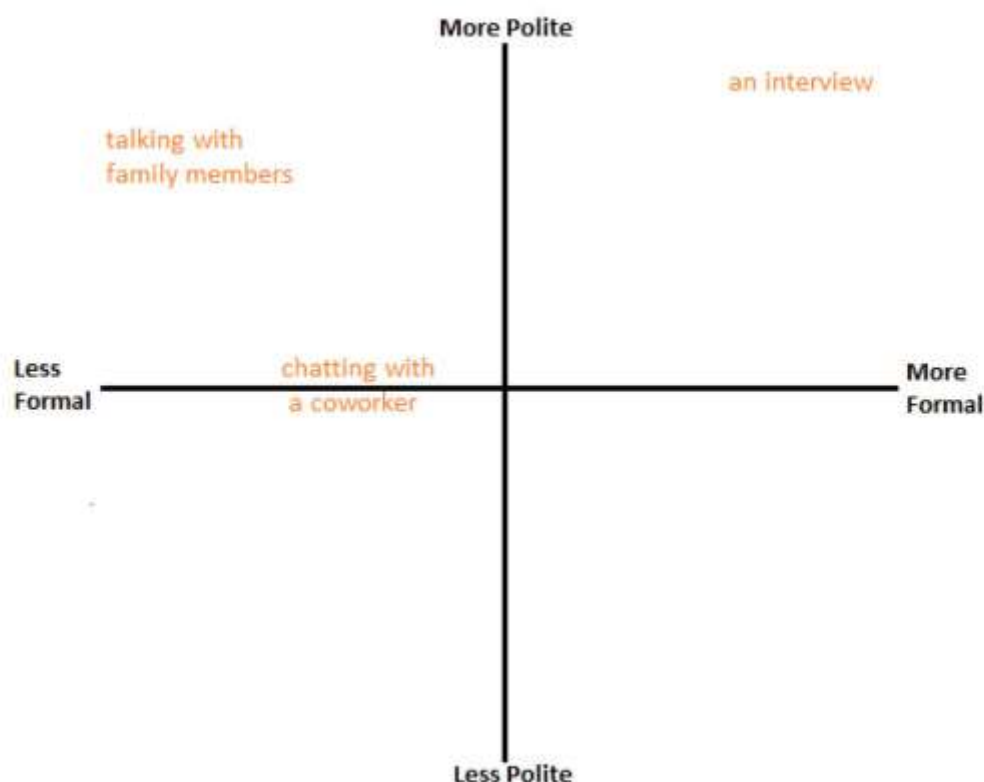
Before continuing to the materials in this chapter, complete the boxes below.

In the center boxes, write (either in bullet point or paragraph format) specific aspects of the **unit/topic** you **want to learn**. As we go through the chapter, you can use this chart to either **check off** what you learn or ask a question about it in that section.

Unit/topic	What I want to learn	✓
Politeness and formality (공손함, 격식)		
Directness (독 바름)		
Writing skills		
Non-verbal skills (Body language, eye contact, etc.)		

Politeness and Formality

In English, politeness and formality are not accomplished with Honorifics, like 존댓말 and 반말. The level of politeness and formality in language constantly changes depending on the situation (상황) or the context (문맥). Any situation can be placed on the graph below, which represents the relationship between formality and politeness.



- Place the following “situations” in the most appropriate spot on the graph. Two **(bolded)** have already been done for you.

an interview	a critical evaluation	emailing a coworker
emailing a friend	writing a memo	an after work get-together
a team meeting	emailing a boss	chatting with a coworker

*On the chart, write situations you can think of in the appropriate places.
They can be in or out of the office.*

Directness

An additional aspect to consider is how direct your language is, that is, how "matter-of-fact" (사실의 문제) it is. Similar to politeness and formality, directness is not objective.



- 1) Read through the following sentences.
- 2) Use a **highlighter, pen, or pencil** to mark any similarities (or differences) you find among the sentences.
- 3) After identifying the differences (or similarities) continue on to the partner work.

Review: Modals in English are used to express **ability, possibility, permission, or obligation**.

- a) Turn in the report by 10pm tonight.
- b) You should relocate to a different office.
- c) I will send a message immediately.
- d) We must meet by this coming Thursday.
- e) Reply to his email as soon as possible.
- f) It would be great if you helped out.
- g) You can meet with her anytime on Wednesday.
- h) She will be gone for two weeks.
- i) You must speak with their financial advisor.
- j) I may go to lunch within 30 minutes.
- k) I would call the office first.
- l) We should be focusing on work right now.
- m) It could be an issue with the printer.
- n) Send an email to Mr. Hart immediately.
- o) If you could call her back, that would be great.

With a partner, answer the following questions.

1. What similarities (or differences) did you find among the sentences?

2. What patterns can you identify among the modals? <i>(Surrounding words, etc.)</i>	
3. Think about your responses to Question 2 . Which of these modals express more or less direct language?	
MORE	LESS
4. Why do you think this? <i>Hint: use the patterns as justification.</i>	

Similar to politeness and formality, directness is not objective and exists on a scale. Considering the sentences from the previous page, place each sentence appropriately on the scale below. Use the corresponding (대응하다) letter to indicate the sentence.

Less direct _____ More direct

Phrasal Modals

Phrasal modals do the same job as modals (*will, must, may, should, could, would, can*). However, they **affect the politeness and directness** of language. Phrasal modals have two key features:

- 1) More than a single word (a group of words)
- 2) Replace (single-word) modal forms

With this information, we can look at:

- 1) What the groups of words are
- 2) Which phrasal modals replace each single-word modal

Phrasal modals can replace single-word modals since their meanings are very similar.

Consider the chart below.

Modals		Phrasal modals	
can	<i>is equivalent to...</i>	am able to	
will		am going to	
should	<i>is nearly equivalent to...</i>	ought to	A phrasal modal can replace more than one modal.
		need to	
would		would like to	
could		am able to	
may		ought to	
		would like to	
must	<i>is equivalent to...</i>	have to	
	<i>but also means...</i>	am going to	

Figuring out which phrasal modal to use (and when to use it) is difficult, even for Native Speakers of English. It may take some trial and error (시행 착오).

To find out which phrasal modals can replace the single-word modals, we can use a substitution test, shown in the example below.

Ex: Jun Park really needs to take a trip to Japan since he is studying Japanese.

Jun Park really should take a trip to Japan since he is studying Japanese.

Other options include:

must
ought to



As mentioned on the previous page, there may be more than one option when replacing modals and phrasal modals. *When substituting, only one option is necessary.*



For each sentence below, do the following:

- Identify if there is a modal/phrasal modal by clearly marking it (highlight, underline, circle, etc.).
- Use the line underneath the sentence to prove you are correct (by testing).

A. Monica needs to turn in the report by Monday morning.

B. Her boss is going to Texas Monday afternoon.

C. Her boss will be gone for two weeks.

D. Monica had to write the report by herself.

E. The office is going to be very busy for the next two weeks.

F. Monica is going to talk to her boss before Monday afternoon.

Writing- Emails

Emails have become a main form of communication in the workplace. It is very important to consider the politeness, formality, and directness of the language in an email. Use your personal knowledge and information from the previous pages to complete the following activity (3 parts),

Part 1) Read the following context and email. While you read, identify and mark any features of the email that show the politeness, formality, and directness.

Context: The office has been very busy lately and everyone has been working a lot. Steve is writing an email to his boss, Amanda Smith, requesting a few days off from work.

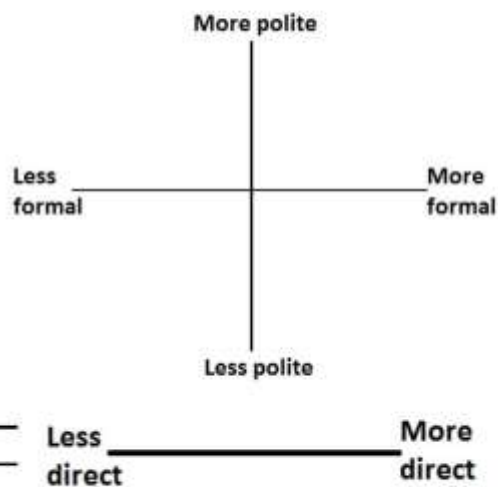
Hi, Amanda,

I know the office has been extremely busy recently. I have been working hard and want to take a break. I will take a few days off next week to relax with my family. Please excuse me from work for a few days next week. I appreciate your approval.

Thanks,
Steve

Part 2) Rate Steve's email on politeness, formality, and directness. Place it in the appropriate place on both charts/scales below.

Part 3) Using the lines below, give reasons as to WHY you rated Steve's email the way you did.

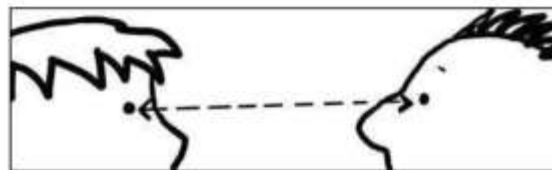


Eye contact

In American culture, eye contact is very important. Making eye contact shows that you're paying attention to the other person and you are actively participating (적극적으로참여) in the conversation. Avoiding eye contact may be seen as rude and can lead to frustration. Practicing and becoming comfortable with making eye contact is critical not only for the workplace, but for any occasion or environment.

Strategies for practicing

At first, making eye contact may seem intimidating. It is important to begin practicing in your comfort zone (안전지대). By choosing a close friend or family member to practice with, you are able to make eye contact comfortably as well as practice frequently.



After becoming more comfortable with making eye contact, get out of the comfort zone and begin to try it daily and with more people. Even making eye contact with the cashier (출납원) at the coffee shop or another employee is a step in the right direction.



Here's a tip:

Sometimes, eye contact may be directed at other areas of the face. If not, it could be considered staring (응시). While it is important to make eye contact directly, looking around the eyes for short amounts of time allow both people to relax for a moment.

Greetings

When greeting someone in English, there are multiple phrases that can be used. Sometimes they can be used interchangeably (교환할), but it is important to be cautious. Using the wrong phrase may lead to confusion.

A few phrases

Questions

First meeting

- How are you?
- How are you doing?
- How is your day going?

Have met before

- How have you been?
- How is work/ life/ your family?

Responses

- Nice to meet you (first meeting).
- I'm good.
- I'm great.
- I'm doing well.
- Very well, thank you.

If you did not already ask them a question, after these say...

"And you?"



In the box below, write the phrases you use most often use when greeting people in English.



In the box below, write any other phrases (either questions or responses) that you know.

The handshake

In more traditional businesses, it is proper to bow when greeting others. In the current business world, the handshake has become the main mode of greeting. It may seem simple, but there are many aspects of a handshake.



- 1) Tightness of grip.
- 2) Length of time.
- 3) Positioning of hands.
- 4) Speed of the 'shake'.
- 5) Timing.



Watch the video from the link below. While you watch, notice the length of time, positioning of the hands, speed of the shake, and timing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFCIMHYHRCI>

As seen in the video, the handshake can be quite difficult to recognize and react to. One common mishap (우연/재난) is when one person reaches out and the other person does not. This may be a bit embarrassing at times.



The best way to deal with it is to smile and forget about it.



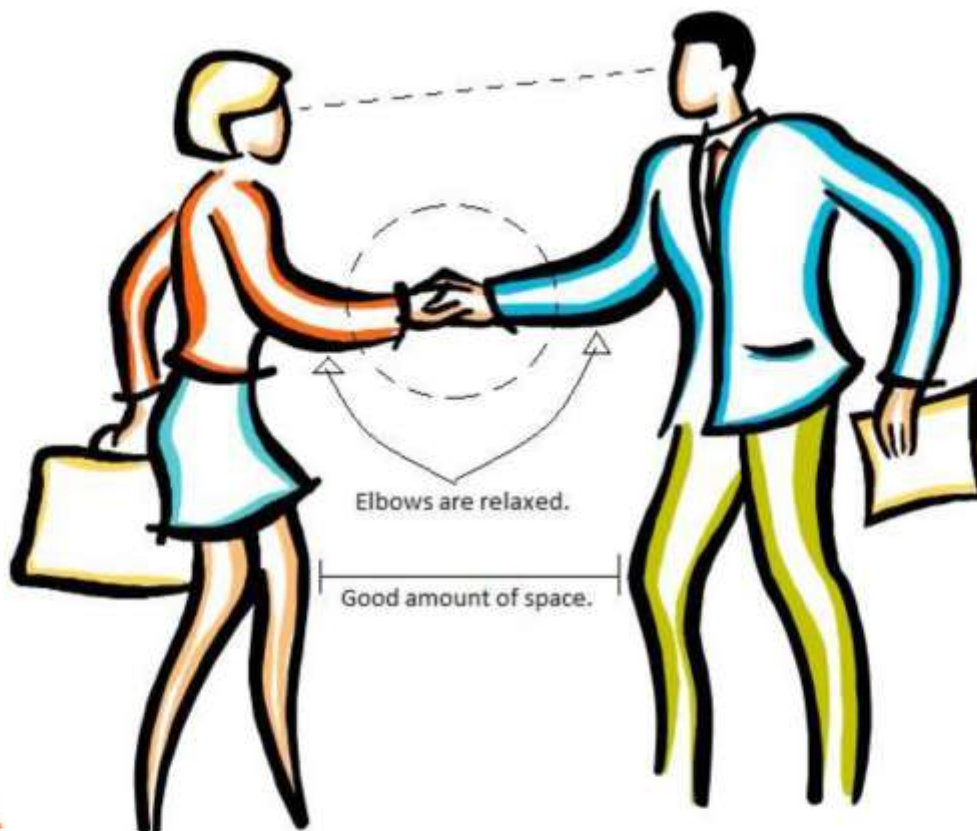
Activity – Greeting Others

Smile

Handshake

Eye contact

When practicing greeting, remember three points: Make sure to smile, give a firm handshake, and make eye contact.



Walk around the room and introduce yourself to every person.

You may use the **phrases from the “greetings” page**, or you may introduce yourself with your name (“Hello, my name is...”).

Body Language

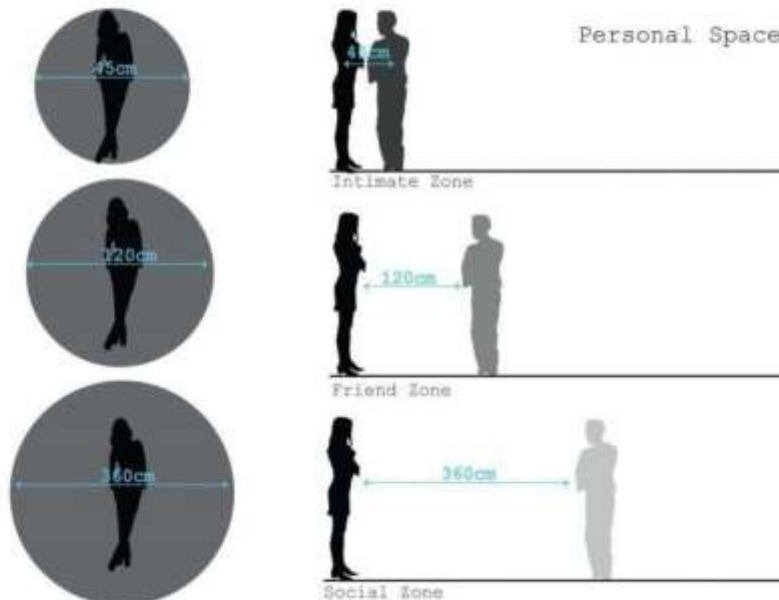
Personal Space

Here are a few rules for personal space.

1. Don't be too far.  It may seem simple, but **negotiating** (협상)
2. Don't be too close. space takes practice, too.

Even though some cultures allow for closeness when having a conversation, it is important to realize everyone's personal space (개인공간). There are different distances that can be labeled as intimate, friend, and social zones.

- 1) The intimate zone is designated (지정) for family members, close friends, and significant others (남자친구, 아내, 연인).
- 2) The friend zone is for acquaintances such as coworkers, your doctor, or neighbors.
- 3) The social zone includes all other people who surround you on a daily basis. This zone is larger so that people may move farther away or closer, but stay in the same zone.

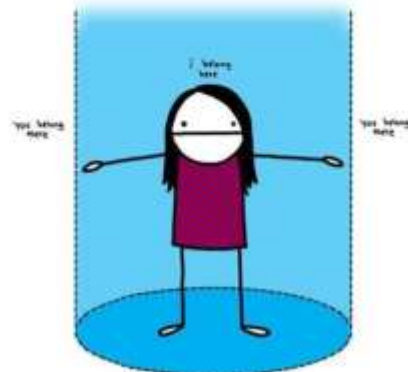


Generally,

A good distance between two people when speaking is usually about one arm's length.



MY PERSONAL AREA



Don't stand in it!!



Watch the video from the link below. Notice the distance between people in the video. Also notice how the people react when their space is invaded.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVsgqG5PN-o>

One arm's length between two people speaking allows for both people to use their hands comfortably as they speak, which is very common for people from Western cultures. You may also use your hands while you speak if you wish. In Western cultures, it is acceptable to be expressive when speaking with anyone, but not required.



More space between the two.

Less hand use.



Less space between the two.

More expressive hands.

Facing

The way you face when talking with someone or greeting them is not as important as the rules about space, but it should be mentioned. Facing an angle or “opening up” is useful when the conversation or greeting is more casual. By not facing the other speaker directly, it helps each person feel less pressure.



Notice how they are not facing each other directly.

How do you feel about “opening up”? Do you think it is less respectful? Why or why not?



Gestures

In Western culture, people can be very animated when they have a conversation. Even if one person is not saying something, they can use their face, their head, their arms, their hands, and even their shoulders to convey some meaning. While it is not expected that everyone use a lot of gestures, it is important to know what certain body gestures and facial expressions mean so you can use them in the future.

Facial expressions

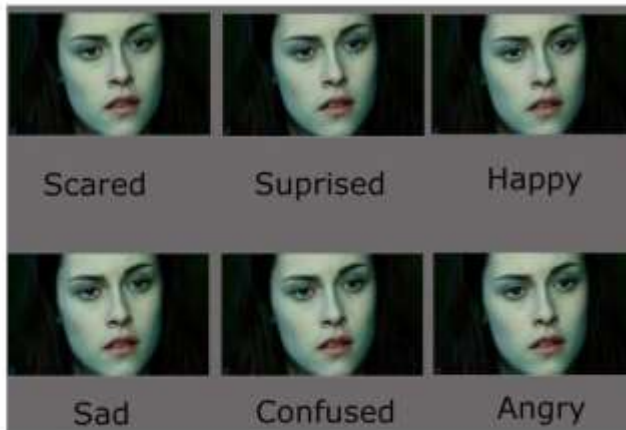
Facial expressions are extremely important both when speaking to others or in a meeting. Some expressions may convey a negative emotion even if that is not the intended emotion. Especially when dealing with people from another culture, it is important to pay attention to their expressions as well as your own.



Watch the video from the link below. While you watch, notice the facial expressions and how they are formed on the face.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrgNKGjSyxA>

- Sometimes, expressions can be different depending on the person's culture background. So, it can be difficult to "read someone's face". Also, some people may not have a very expressive face and it can be difficult to notice the difference in their emotions. When this happens, it is best to ask a question about how they are feeling- making sure to say it politely.



"I can't tell how you're feeling. Please tell me."

"I can't tell what you're thinking. Please tell me."



Watch the video from the link below. While you watch, think about the expressions of **EVERYONE** in the video.

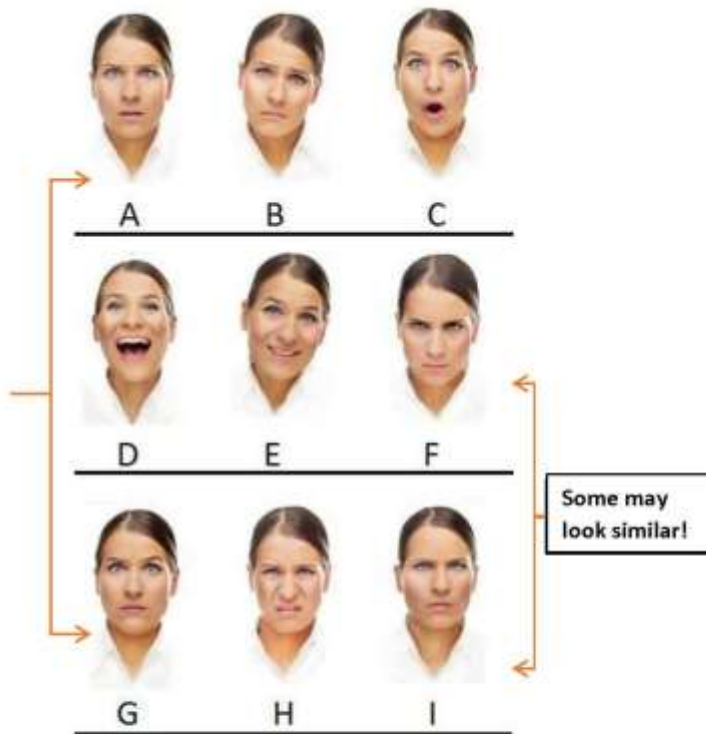
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWuPxHuMezY>



Activity- matching expressions

Choose which face **you think matches best** with the each expression written on the left. Write the corresponding letter in the blank by each word.

Concerned _____
 Confused _____
 Excited _____
 Pleasant _____
 Angry _____
 Surprised _____
 Disgusted _____
 Nervous _____
 Scared _____



Glossary

cashier: an employee (as in a store) who handles monetary transactions.

출납원: 통화 거래를 처리한 직원(토에서 가게를).

comfort zone: a place or situation where one feels safe or at ease and without stress.

안전지대 (safety island): 는 장소나 상황 혹은 편하고 스트레스를 받지 않고 안전하게 느껴진다.

context: the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed.

문맥: 는 이벤트, 설명, 또는 생각이며, 그 규칙들 중 철저하고도 평가 이해할 수 있는 용어로 설정을 갖게 되는 상황.

corresponding: match or agree almost exactly

해당하는: 매치 또는 거의 정확히 동의한다.

designated: appoint or assign (someone)

지정: 또는 양도하(누군가)를 임명하다

*directness: straightforwardness, strict accuracy.

직심: 직정, 엄격한 정확성. *There is no 100% Korean equivalent.

formality: the rigid observance of rules of convention or etiquette

격식: 규칙이나 에티켓의 규칙의 엄격한 의식이다.

interchangeable: Something able to be exchanged with another.

교환할: 다른으로 교환해야 할 수 있네요.

matter-of-fact: unemotional and practical, businesslike.

형용사: 특히 감정을 보일 거라고 예상되는 상황에서 아무런 감정 표현 없이, 사무적인

*mishap: an unlucky accident.

재난/우연: 불행한 사고. *There is no 100% Korean equivalent.

negotiating: try to reach an agreement or compromise.

협상: 합의 또는 타협에 도달하도록 해 보세요.

participating: to take part, be actively involved.

적극적으로참여: 참가할, 적극적으로 관여하다.

personal space: the physical space immediately surrounding someone, into which any encroachment feels threatening to or uncomfortable for them.

개인공간: 로 어떤 침략이 느껴거나 불편하게에 위협하고 물리적 공간 즉시 누군가를 둘러싼.

politeness: Good manners or etiquette- different in every culture.

공손함: 좋은 매너나 예의 범절 교육-모든 문화에 다른.

situation: a set of circumstances in which one finds oneself; a state of affairs.

상황: 상황의 세트에 하나다 사태를 찾는다.

staring: Look fixedly or vacantly at someone or something with one's eyes wide open

응시: 눈 하나 깜박하지 않고 멍하니 바라보다 눈으로 누군가 또는 무언가를 넓게 펼쳐져보세요.

trial and error: The trying of one thing or another until something succeeds.

시행 착오: 한가지 또는 다른 종류의 노력할 때까지 뭔가 성공하고 있다.

Introduction

In considering some current English language teaching (ELT) materials, three books (Jenkins & Johnson, 2008; Jones, 2008; Zwier & Hughes, 2003) were chosen as they seem to have more communicative approaches, the same as the current materials. Of the three ELT books, the third is the only one that introduces different ways of agreeing with people. Though this is a plus in comparison to the other two textbooks, there is no explanation of *why* or *when* the students would choose one response over another. This is an example of how current textbooks may include the third dimension of pragmatics and yet do not focus on it.

Additionally, even language pedagogy books (e.g., Brown, 2007) and materials design books (e.g., Harwood, 2010) written by scholars seem to be lacking in their discussion of this third dimension. Some (e.g., Brown & Lee, 2015) do not discuss pragmatics or pragmalinguistic knowledge at all. This additional information demonstrates that there is not only a lack of attention to pragmatics in ELT materials, but a lack of attention in academic discussion.

Larson-Freeman (2003) suggested that grammar, semantics, and pragmatics are three, interconnected dimensions of language. Ideally, these three dimensions should all be developed during second language acquisition (SLA), with one not taking precedence over another. However, ELT textbooks “continue to concentrate on the acquisition of linguistic competence, with insufficient attention to a fuller communicative competence” (Boxer & Pickering, 1995, p. 52). As Jolly and Bolitho (2011) suggested, the first step in materials development is identification of a need. The apparent imbalance of these dimensions of these dimensions served as the catalyst for the creation of the current materials.

Therefore, I argue that a stronger focus on the dimension of pragmatics within textbooks (thus classrooms) may assist in bypassing negative experiences that students in more traditional classrooms (that is, those that do not focus on pragmatic knowledge) may have experienced while encouraging increased communicative competence.

Overall format

As the current materials are focused on, thus titled, *communication* in the workplace, it is paramount that integration of skills and a variety of activity types that encourage communication and are applicable to the workplace (and the specific students) be included. The activities within require learners to utilize all skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking), and the four main learning styles (visual, auditory, read-write, kinaesthetic) are taken into consideration as well. For example, some activities included require students to interact with technology and watch videos online. Especially in the student population for which the current materials were created, use of technology is expected, increasing authenticity. The videos chosen are available on the free web, which allows students to review as much as they want or need. Additionally, the inclusion of these technology-based activities supports the extension of the individual's language-learning process, as well as learning opportunities, outside of the classroom (Reinders & White, 2010).

The integration of skills in tasks is a favored technique in communicative language approaches (Green, 2014, p. 174) and arguably supports better communicative competence as they simulate what learners often must do in 'real-life' settings (Douglas, 2010, p. 53), which is a central goal of the current materials. Additionally, the variety of activity types encourages more well-rounded English language learners (ELL). That is, not one skill or learning style dominates

the ELLs instruction, thus ability. Partner work is also required in multiple activities, which supports greater communicative competence through “mini” conversations (Hagiwara, 1975, p. 185).

As argued by Tomlinson (2011), “[l]anguage learners who achieve positive affect are much more likely to achieve communicative competence than those who do not” (p. 7). As a materials designer, my driving forces are student affect and pragmatic awareness, which are interrelated in my opinion. A fine example is shown by Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991), who states, “[s]peakers who do not use pragmatically appropriate language run the risk of appearing uncooperative at the least, or, more seriously, rude or insulting” (p. 4). The negative feedback from the students’ conversation partner(s) would certainly have a negative impact on their affect. As one affective factor (language ego) notifies others that “you are what you speak” (Brown, 2007, p. 324), learners who receive feedback informing them that they are “uncooperative... rude, or insulting” may internalize those attributes, and their continued learning process will be negatively affected. Therefore, facial expressions (and other affect-related items) are explicitly taught in the materials to mitigate these effects.

Related to affect, are student agency and motivation. The objectives chart, found on page 2 of the materials, is the final important aspect of the current materials to be mentioned. Each “unit/topic” has a corresponding box in which students are encouraged to write “what [they] want to learn”. By allowing them to identify what they want to get out of the course, student agency is increased before the lesson even begins. The chart also includes a third box which the students can use to “check off” items when they are covered/achieved throughout the course. Though the act of “checking off” is relatively simple, it represents a reward students can strive for. Since “[s]uccessful learners are conscious of potential rewards” (Brown & Lee, 2015, p. 91),

a good way to increase students' consciousness is raising their awareness through filling out a personalized objectives chart. Additionally, Dörnyei (1994) claimed that “motivation is one of the main determinants of second/foreign language learning achievement” (p. 273). Therefore, the current materials attempt to increase motivation by encouraging student agency.

The current materials also attempt to be visually appealing while also offering visual representations of concepts learners may be less familiar with. For example, when the materials require learners to **highlight**, **bold**, or circle parts within a sentence, the text itself examples those actions, as just shown. The visual presentation of the materials, including formatting and color usage, increases stimulation when interacting with the pages. There is variety in graphic choices and placement, spacing, presentation of activities, and other design features, but the titles of each section are very apparent, which allows students to better navigate the materials as well as consider and “study” the elements separately before being required to combine them in the included activities.

Politeness, directness, and formality

The current materials offer a fair amount of explanation as it is geared towards higher level learners. The included amount of explanation is solely appropriate for higher level learners as a lower level student would not understand, thus benefit, from it (Hagiwara, 1975). Additionally, Brown (2007) suggested adult learners can handle more abstract ideas and concepts (p. 104), such as **politeness**, **directness**, and **formality**, which require more explanation as well as exploration through discussion. Therefore, a majority of the items on which these materials focus would assumedly lead to class discussion in which the learners can practice using their analytical abilities, which supports greater competence in adult learners (DeKeyser, 2000).

In many current ELT textbooks, issues such as directness, politeness, and formality are discussed very minimally (if discussed at all). These features of the English language are prominent in speech acts and important for interpersonal communication. In some languages (Korean being one) the formality/politeness levels are apparent grammatically; Korean uses honorifics called *chon-de-mal* (formal/ very polite) and *pan-mal* (informal/less polite). In English, these features of language (as well as directness) are not dichotomous and exist on a continuum that is neither easily nor explicitly taught, but is worthwhile to include in ESL curriculum.

These language features may not necessarily be considered “language skills” which ELLs must improve. Rather, students’ awareness of these features should be increased no matter what grammatical feature is being discussed or taught. The features of politeness, directness, and formality are applicable to the English language as a whole. Therefore, the current materials present them first and separately from the other “skills” and are mentioned and considered throughout the entirety of the materials. Additionally, these features are presented by charts and graphs supporting the gradience of these features of language. Also, the charts and graphs encourage student input, allowing localization of the contents so that they are immediately applicable and helpful to learners, which Methold (1972) stressed as an important principle for materials developers.

Vocabulary

The vocabulary words included in the glossary were not chosen based on their relation to the content of the materials. That is, more basic vocabulary specific to the workplace environment (for example, briefcase, send (an email), payday) would be covered in previous

classes, outside the realm of the current materials. Instead, the vocabulary words surfaced throughout the writing of the informational passages if the words were considered too unfamiliar or unable to be guessed from the surrounding context. This method of vocabulary word presentation supports incidental vocabulary learning in which words are met but not taught during the reading (Nation, 2013, p. 93). Though this method does not support much gain in immediate vocabulary knowledge, the inclusion of a native-language (L1) translation directly following the vocabulary words increases immediate comprehension of the readings. Certainly, vocabulary activities could be created if the instructor (or students) deemed it necessary.

In-text

As mentioned, vocabulary words are immediately followed by a direct L1 translation. Though glossing, which offers brief definitions or synonyms of new vocabulary words (Nation, 2013, p. 238), is a popular step taken by materials designers and helpful for ELLs, Watanabe (1997) found that a gloss immediately preceded by the vocabulary word may not be helpful if the students do not realize the gloss is a definition, not new information. Therefore, the current materials bypass this issue since the L1 translations cannot be mistaken for new information and interrupt the reading process as minimally as possible.

As the goal of the passages in the current materials is to convey information to the students rather than teach them new words, comprehension of the meaning of the words is supported by minimal interruption of the reading process through inclusion of the direct L1 translations. Though this method of scaffolding learning of vocabulary words may be helpful for some learners, learners that prefer to know the extended definition(s) have the option to pause and look in the glossary.

Glossary

As Chun and Payne (2004) found that looking up L1 glosses was the most frequently used as well as the most preferred, the glossary offers both L1 and L2 translations of vocabulary words. Words that were found to not have a 100% Korean equivalent are noted with an asterisk so that the students (and instructor) are aware those words may increase the learning burden on the student, thus be more difficult for Korean L1 learners to conceptualize and/or retain. Formulaic language may also be more difficult for ELLs to conceptualize initially as these “big words” consist of multiple morphemes. However, these big words (i.e. multiple-word words) are stored in the lexicon the same way as single-word words (Conklin, & Schmitt, 2012) and so all “words” are presented in one cohesive list.

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